Seattle
Design
Commission

epartment of Planning and
Development

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APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1st December 2005

Projects Reviewed

Jefferson Park Expansion – Phase 1 Development
Magnolia Bridge Replacement Project
12TH Avenue Streetscape Improvements
Aurora Avenue North Improvements

Convened: 9:30am

Adjourned: 2:30pm

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair
Pam Beyette
Adam Christiansen
Karen Kiest
Sheri Olson
Nic Rossouw
Dennis Ryan
Darrell Vange

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Layne Cubell
Tom Iurino
Alison Maitland Scheetz

Phase: Schematic Design
Previous Reviews: 06 Oct 05 (Project Briefing)
Presenters: Randy Robinson, Department of Parks and Recreation
Andy Mitton, Berger Partnership

Attendees: Michael Shiosaki, Department of Parks and Recreation
Greg Brower, Berger Partnership
Carolyn Law, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs

Time: 1 hours (SDC Ref. # 169)

Commission's Summary and Action

The Design Commission thanks the Parks Department and their design team for the thoughtful presentation and approves the schematic design with the following comments. The Commission,

- **commends the direction that the design has moved in, and thinks this is a great improvement and good response to the Commission's previous comments on the project earlier this fall.**
- **encourages proponents to concentrate on making the design clear and understandable beyond just the program elements.**
- **recommends working with the project artist to maximize the sculptural land forming opportunities.**
- **advocates the use of trees to both frame views of the city and create smaller areas of open space within the park.**
- **urges proponents to look closely at the future parking needs and develop creative parking solutions that do not impede the design.**
- **is concerned about the lack of proximity of the play area to the rest rooms and parking, and the wall effect of the fencing along Beacon Avenue.**
- **feels the design of the West Terrace better incorporates this area into the overall design and increases its utility.**
- **encourages proponents to improve access from the North West corner and to reconsider the use of grass on the steep slope there.**
- **urges the team to revisit the storm water feature and suggest exploring the possibility of a year round water element to make it more compelling.**

Proponents Presentation

In response to comments heard from the Commission earlier in the fall, this presentation aimed to describe how the design departs from the 2002 Master Plan, address the edges of the site and connect to the surrounding community.

Since the last presentation the proponents have,

- Revisited the master plan and assessed the nodes, grading and overall concept of the main promenade. This led them to
    - challenge the notion of the promenade and explore the idea of a loop route through the park.
    - reconsider the site's reservoir history and look at the opportunities to play with water on the site, through storm water or possibly a feature.

- Returned to the community to establish a vision statement. The community listed the following traits as important;
    a. location – in the city and Beacon Hill
    b. views
    c. diversity – the community, the users, open spaces, closed spaces, passive, active
    d. community involvement – sense of ownership through paving, garden
    e. buildings community through sports
    f. inviting – especially at the edges
    g. logical flow
    h. families
    i. future generations
    j. open space – take full advantage of the scale

- Developed two options, which have been consolidated into this schematic design. The main changes are as follows;
    - Combines the concept of the loop with the promenade
    - Moved the main entrance form the community center to the NE corner, which they feel opens the corner.
    - Includes a storm water feature of flat calm water by the overlook
    - Emphasizes the beam at the outlook by using the earth that SPU will be required to remove during the project.
    - Moved the play area close to the community center, thus opening up the NE corner of the park.
    - Removed the berm, which acted as a barrier, at the NE corner of the park.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Asks what the surfaces of the sports field are.
    - Synthetic
- Thanks proponents for the section drawings. These help to explain the earth work theme.
- Is concerned that the play area is too far from the bathrooms and parking
- Asks how the community vision statement was generated.
    - Had preferences but hadn't heard what the community really wants the park to

look like and therefore held am advisory group meeting to generated the list

- Asks if the school influenced their design.
    - Yes, this is one of the reasons the promenade was reestablished.
- Requested clarification of the views
    - Intend to take advantage of both views out of the park and views across the areas of open space within the park.
- Wonders if the baseball field fence impacts the view from the Bowling Club House
    - Studies have indicated that it does not. Appreciates how the direction this design has moved in.
- Questions the appropriateness of the long grass and cautions of the impact of sparrows and blackberries
- Warns against creating a wetland in the middle of the meadow. Recommends thinking of other ways to integrate water into the site and suggests considering a year round feature.
- Questions the appropriateness of the playground location.
- Appreciates the efforts to better connect the park to the neighborhood but feels this could still be developed further.
- Is excited to see the direction the design is going.
- Questions the creation of such large open spaces and suggests proponents use trees and vegetation to define some smaller outdoor rooms.
- Is worried that some of the open spaces may be too big.
    - Understands perspective
    - Is conscious of the large summer festivals that take place,
- Reiterates the concern that the open space is very generous in its dimensions and asks "how big is big enough, and how big is too big?"
- Wonders if proponents have considered what the park would look like if the reservoirs were not there.
    - Yes, in previous concepts
- Inquires how the proponents will deal with parking and if they know what the demands will be
    - Trying to generate creative parking options
    - Trying not to use Parks money for parking
- Suggests optimizing the use of parking area in the NW corner, especially for sporting events.

- Commends the practical use of the earthwork but encourage proponents and Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs to stretch art budget and maximize the opportunities for a great earth work.
- Warns against loosing the opportunity to be a designer. Is concerned that proponents are not fully addressing the key elements they identified in their initial statement views, scale and disconnect to the surrounding neighborhood.
- Suggests that the NW corner should be more aggressively addressed.

1 Dec 2005 Project:MAGNOLIA BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Phase: Schematic Design
Previous Reviews: 15 July 2004 (Concept Design Update), 17 Oct 2002 (Pre design), and 17 April 2003 (Concept Design)

Presenters: Kirk Jones, Seattle Department of Transportation
Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU

Attendees: Celia Fortier, Seattle Department of Transportation
Chelsea Tennyson, Enviro Issues
Sarah Brent, Enviro Issues
Peter Smith, HNTB

Time: 1 hours (SDC Ref. # 169 – DC00290)

Commission's Summary and Action

The Commission thanks the team for thoroughly updating them on the Magnolia Bridge Replacement Project in terms of the urban design impacts and the latest set of alternatives. The Commission,

- **supports and favors Alternative C, with a 7:1 vote, followed by Alternative D. Alternative A is less favored, and the Rehabilitation Alternative is not liked at all.**

- **debated whether this project is about a bridge or about the development of the nearby waterfront, since the location of the bridge influences how the water's edge will be treated.**

- **identified two national trends, which informed their decision. Firstly, the desire to make waterfronts more accessible and public, and secondly, the realization that industry and land use of waterfronts is changing.**

- **feels the potential to create an accessible waterfront, one that is part of the community, is much greater than the city is currently embracing or adopting.**

- **believes that the present climate of fear and safety should not override long-term design decisions.**

- **considers both Alternatives C and D to provide the potential for good pedestrian and bike access to the water, and opportunities for urban design development at the ground level, which is why they find them more desirable.**

Proponents Presentation

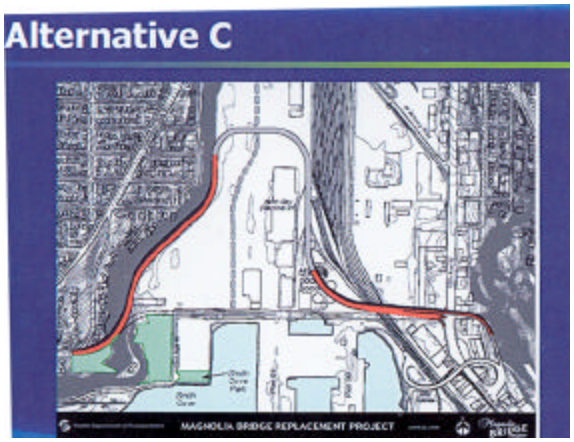
This is the fourth time that the project has been before the committee during the design process. The focus of this presentation is to outline the four options still under consideration and then to hear the Commissions recommendations.
The aim of the Magnolia Bridge Project is to

- provide a reliable route
- maintain aesthetics
- improve traffic mobility and flow
- improve waterfront access
- support neighborhoods, businesses, marine industrial construction impacts
- maintain pedestrian and bicycle connections, support multi-modal connections

The Proponents explained the challenges with topography, the diverse land use, public realm and port development.

Four alternatives are in consideration

Alternative A- Replace the existing bridge with a new structure directly to the south. Two ramps would tie into the main north south route on the central ground surface.



Alternative C – Construct a bridge over the rail road, a segment of surface road though the Port of Seattle's property and a bridge that climbs the bluff up the Magnolia hillside.

Alternative D – Construct a new bridge in the form of an arc to the north of the existing bridge.

Rehabilitation Alternative – Bring the existing bridge up to current load and design standards using the existing bridge structure to the extent possible. Replace the bridge deck (roadway) and stabilize the foundation and concrete columns.

The project team has assessed the impact of each alternative as traditionally evaluated in Environmental Impacts Statements. In terms of water quality, wetlands, air quality, noise and cultural historic and archeological resources, the alternative options have similar or identical impacts. However, impacts differ by alternative in the following areas;

Construction Detour Time	Vegetation
Added Travel Time	Fish, Wildlife, & Habitat
Pedestrian Use & Safety	Geology, Soils, & Topography
Residential & Business Displacement	Land Use
Displacement & Environmental Justice	Recreation
Waterways, Hydrology & Floodplains	Services and Utilities
Visual Quality	Hazardous Materials

The proponents outlined some of the major differences.

The public has been involved throughout the process through a Design Advisory Group and Open House Meetings. The public generally favors alternative A and D. Alternative C is considered too

circuitous and they reject the rehabilitation alternative. The primary concern is bridge closure time.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Asks which the proponents prefer.
  - A and D
  - Both are functionally the same
  - From an urban design perspective D because
    1. Pulls away form the water and complies with the shoreline policies
    2. Offers opportunities to connect to the surface plane and water
    3. Has less impact on the park property
  - A is important because it follows the desire line.

- Questions how the proponents determined the desire line.
  - Pedestrian route along the waterfront.

- Fails to understand how the pedestrian desire line is satisfied through a bridge alternative
  - Issue of security
  - Aim to take the most opportunity of a bridge

- Asks for further explanation of C
  - The Port master plan puts a main north south road on the western edge of flat land
  - Alternative C puts a road through the middle of this

- Suggests that if C is not an option, need to consider a bridge that is not an eyesore.

- Would like to see the bridge skirt the water's edge, in order to reveal the unique qualities of Seattle's working waterfront.

- Feels it would be inappropriate to support A, considering the current proposals to remove the viaduct downtown.

- Confirms that D pulls away from the water and creates potential opportunity for public access.

- Is adamant that the climate of security and fear, as assessed by the Port, should not drive design.

- Reiterates support for alternative D and feels that the project can be mitigated with a pedestrian friendly structure.

- Cautions against trying to do too many things with the structure.

- Proposes that the team needs to keep two trends in mind
  a) the desire for accessible waterfront
  b) the realization that industrial uses of the waterfront are changing

- Recommends alternative C because this has the least impact and affords the most opportunities.
    - Resistance form the Port because it inhibits their plans

- Feels A is a practical transportation solution

- Understands that this is very political environment

- Has consensus to recommend alternative C, followed by D, reluctantly A, but not the rehabilitation alternative.

1 Dec 2005 Project:12TH AVENUE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Phase: Staff Briefing

Presenters: Tammy Frederick, Seattle Department of Transportation
Lisa Rutzick, Department of Planning and Development
Lyle Bicknell, Department of Planning and Development

Attendees: Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU

Time: 30 Mins. (SDC Ref. # 170)

Commission's Summary and Action

The Commission thanks DPD and SDOT staff for the briefing on the set of streetscape improvements proposed by two private developers trying to develop a comprehensive master plan for the block. It

- **recommends that SDOT approve the sidewalk design features being proposed by the developers, subject to the following comments and concerns.**
- **would like to commend the property developers for their significant efforts to improve the streetscape and to reduce the clutter of overhead utilities and utility poles.**
- **is generally in favor of the sanctity of the public sidewalk, but in this case, supports the special design features since they are sympathetic and complementary to SDOT's own street specifications and recent 12th Avenue streetscape improvements.**
- **stop short of endorsing the wood plank stamped concrete and have some concern about "do ormatting" all the building entries.**
- **supports the artwork and street furniture, such as custom bike racks, benches and seating areas, provided that more detail is forthcoming.**

Proponents Presentation

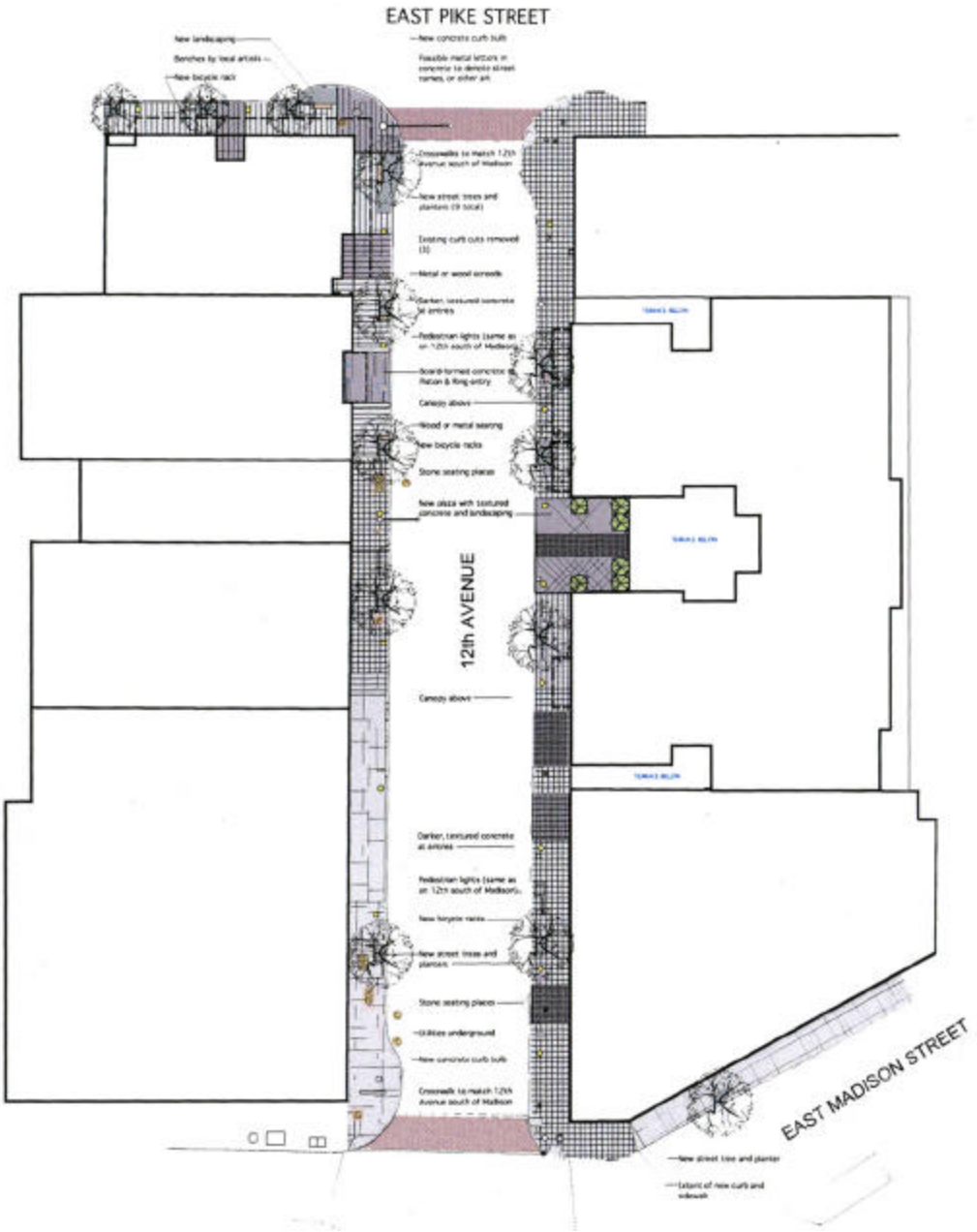
The property owners along 12th Avenue East between Madison and Pike Street are working together to improve the streetscape and pedestrian environment as new mixed-use projects are moving through design and into construction.

The intent of the project is to create a new "sense of place" along 12th Avenue that draws on recent improvement south of Madison. Elements of continuity include pedestrian lights, crosswalks treatment and street trees. Sidewalk treatments would be coordinated on both sides of

12th Avenue, with new sidewalk landscaping, bicycle racks an seating. There is a desire to work with artisans on streetscape elements such as seating and possibly bicycle racks.

The proposed elements for review include

- Increase lampblack in concrete to emphasize entries and curb bulbs
- Use of different texture and /or scoring patterns at main entrances (diagonal scoring is indicated at residential and garage entries on east side of the block; wood texture is proposed at the entry to Piston & Ring).
- May use some metal in the sidewalk, for street or building names, or possibly art objects.



Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Recommends a planned attitude to the art work, rather than a piecemeal approach.
- Suggests referencing the SDOT art plan.
- Questions the limited number of trees
    - Restricted by buried City Light power lines
- Recognizes and encourages the voluntary commitment from businesses
- Appreciates the voluntary nature of the improvements, but is concerned that the treatment to the concrete sidewalk, at business entrances, will resemble doormats. Worries that this element is self serving.
- Encourages continuity in the public streetscape.
- Feels it is important to uphold the public domain of the sidewalk.
- Thinks paving applications add richness to the urban fabric.
- Does not support the application of a wood plank texture.

1 Dec 2005 Project:AURORA AVENUE NORTH IMPROVEMENTS

Phase: Concept Design Update

Presenters: Diana Holloway, Seattle Department of Transportation
Shane DeWald, Seattle Department of Transportation
Karen Iwasaki, Seattle Public Utilities
Don Monaghan, CH2M Hill

Time: 1 hours (SDC Ref. # 169 – DC00353)

Commission's Summary

The Commission appreciates the team's presentation and recommends approval of the concept design. They

- **support the idea of a simplified landscape treatment and materials palette to ease long-term maintenance on the project.**
- **urge proponents to evaluate and consider the circulation and land use patterns that extend perpendicularly beyond the Aurora corridor and encourage proponents to explore how the design could reflect the neighborhoods on either side.**
- **support efforts to work with local businesses to consolidate their vehicular entrances and suggest exploring opportunities for public/private partnerships.**
- **encourage proponents to consider extending the strips of alternating landscape and hardscape to promote a sense of continuity and less of a jagged edge.**
- **agree with the flexible design of the median and applaud the proponents desire to design the median to best accommodate the option to plant (Full scale) trees in the future.**
- **urge the use of big trees wherever possible considering the scale of Aurora, and where this is not possible, they recommend tightening the spaces between trees to create more of a cluster.**

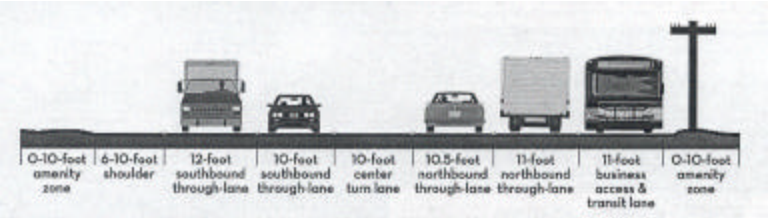
Proponents Presentation

The Aurora Ave N transit, pedestrian and safety improvements project aims to, improve safety for all users, increase transit speed and reliability, make Aurora a more inviting destination for the broader community, and keep Aurora an accessible, viable business district. This presentation outlined the proposed improvements.

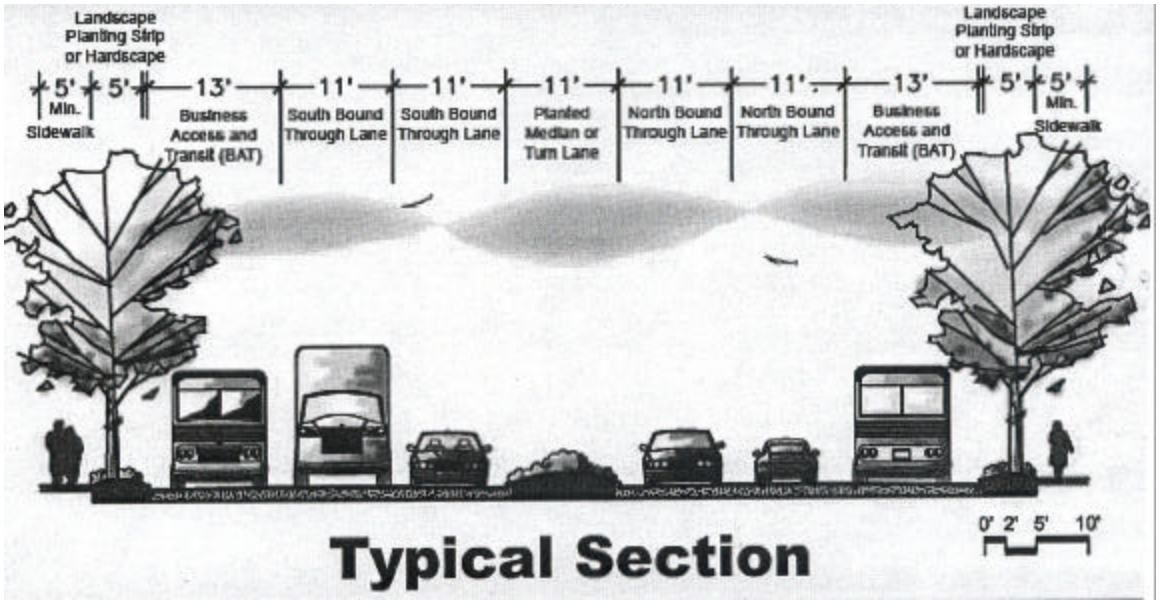
The project, known as North Focus Area extends 35 blocks from N110th to N145th Street. Since the proponents last presentation back in March they have considered the Commission's recommendations, prepared preliminary alignment of Aurora and carried out community outreach. In response, they propose the following improvements,

- Widen existing lanes
- Add southbound BAT lane
  (BAT = right turn Business Access + Transit Lane)
- Add raised median
- Construct continuous sidewalks and landscaping
- Improve pedestrian crossing at intersections

Aurora Today



Aurora Tomorrow



Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Asks how the community has responded
  - Have had several meetings with the community and local business owners.
  - Residents have generally been supportive
  - Business are concerned that trees will block buildings and signs, therefore intend to chose trees and landscaping that will not visually block
  - General support to improve pedestrian safety and comfort
  - Strong request for low maintenance landscaping, therefore seek to implement very simple palette

- Wonders if other community development plans in this area will be integrated with this project.
  - Yes, aim to connect. However, this project does focus on Aurora

- Urges DPD and SDOT to articulate and consider the circulation and land use patterns beyond the Aurora corridor.
  - Are considering and factoring land and traffic uses adjacent to Aurora.
  - Are reviewing how the median will change

- Inquires if businesses have been approached to work collaboratively. Suggests that this offers a great opportunity for public private partnerships
  - Yes, are currently exploring the possibility of consolidating driveways.

- Encourages proponents to simplify the pattern of planting strips. Suggests that blocks should either be paved or landscaped rather than alternate 6' strips.

- Encourages the use of multi-stemmed shrubs such as vine maples in median

- Advocates for large trees where ever possible, owning to the scale of the street. Where this is not practical, suggests closer spacing.

- Questions the priority of the project.
  - Designing the whole corridor, then identifying what can be achieved first

- Wonders if proponents hope to get full funding
  Yes

- Suggests covered bus stops.

- Inquires if the project is addressing storm water issues.
  - Yes, beyond what is required.

- Questions which end SPU would rather the project start.
  - South end, because this is closer to existing projects, although would still need a connection between 110th and Green lake.